

VZCZCXRO3834
OO RUEHDA
DE RUEHAK #0751/01 1471306
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 271306Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9742
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC//PA
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 0057
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 5787
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 3873
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 7323
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 7202
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 3785
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
RHMFISS/USDOCO 6ATAF IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39OS INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 523 IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 522 INCIRLIK AB TU
RUEUITH/AFLO ANKARA TU

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 ANKARA 000751

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#)
SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION
WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 2009

In Today's Papers

FM Davutoglu Visits Baku, Supports Resolution to Karabakh, Emphasizes Strategic Partnership
Media outlets report Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu gave warm messages Tuesday in Baku regarding the future of Turkey-Azerbaijan ties. In a joint press conference with the Azerbaijani FM Elmar Memmedyarov, Davutoglu said, "Our Azerbaijani brothers and sisters should know that, just as in the past, Turkey will be on the side of Azerbaijan in the future," Davutoglu said. "Our message to regional actors, including Armenia, is very clear. The region must be free of occupations and tensions," Davutoglu noted. Davutoglu also emphasized that the issue of Upper Karabakh must be resolved as soon as possible within the framework of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. "Relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan are excellent. Turkey and Azerbaijan are not merely friends and neighbors. They are also strategic partners," Davutoglu said. Davutoglu wrapped up his contacts in Baku and returned home after meeting President Ilham Aliyev, Parliament Speaker Oktay Esedov and Prime Minister Artur Rasizade.

Istanbul Workshop on Turkey-Armenia Ties
Papers report the Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA) is bringing together opinion makers from Turkey and Armenia for a two-day workshop in Istanbul. At the end of the first day of discussions Tuesday, the participants agreed that progress on reconciliation between Armenia and Turkey looked more difficult now than it did two months ago, especially after Prime Minister Erdogan's visit to Azerbaijan. The Armenian participants repeated their frustration that their closed border with Turkey constitutes the last closed border in Europe. The Armenian participants also expressed frustration that Turkish policies "are being taken hostage by Azerbaijan." Mainstream Hurriyet says "While Armenian participants backed the Armenian government's position that there should be no preconditions to normalization, some Turkish participants defended different views on normalization and the Nagorno-Karabakh problem," and some other Turks agreed with their Armenian counterparts that if the normalization process was taken hostage by the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, there would not be any progress in bilateral ties. Islamist-oriented Zaman quotes the

Caucasus Media Institute director Alexander Iskenderyan as saying, "We don't expect the border to be opened soon. The betterment of ties between the Turkish and Armenian peoples will take longer than the political rapprochement between the two countries."

Editorial Commentary on Turkey-Armenia

Sami Kohen wrote in mainstream Milliyet: "Following PM Erdogan's statement establishing a resolution to Nagorno Karabakh as a precondition for normalization with Armenia, the whole process has been brought into a de facto deadlock. Two conferences were held recently in Istanbul by NGOs to brainstorm whether the process is really over or whether something can still be done to salvage the process. Even though the process is deadlocked there is still hope for the future because both Turkey and Armenia do not want to give up. Yet given the conditions, it would be realistic to not expect any fast developments. This is going to be a long road that will require patience."

Cengiz Candar wrote in liberal-intellectual Radikal: "The motto 'One nation, two states' continues to dominate the tone of the Azerbaijan-Turkey relationship. It is something very nice to hear, but far from representing a fact. Today this approach is harming Turkey's regional interests and weakening its power. If Turkey improves its ties with Armenia and does not allow its regional policy to be captivated by Baku, it will also serve Azerbaijani interests at the end of the day."

Papers: The PKK Wants its Own Parliament
Media outlets report about the interview PKK leader Murat Karayilan

ANKARA 00000751 002 OF 004

gave to The Times in the Qandil Mountains. "Britain accepted the will of the Scots by giving them a parliament of their own, and that's what the Turks have to do with us," said Karayilan. Mainstreams Vatan and Milliyet comment that earlier the PKK had demanded their own federation according to the Kosovo model and the Basque model, but now the organization wants the "Scottish model."

Addressing his party group Tuesday, the pro-Kurdish DTP leader Ahmet Turk said Prime Minister Erdogan and CHP leader Deniz Baykal should take "new steps in the Kurdish issue" before the end of the PKK ceasefire on June 1. Turk also stressed the support of the opposition was essential for a settlement in the Kurdish question.

Media outlets also report DTP lawmakers Ahmet Turk, Emine Ayna and Selahattin Demirtas have been invited to the court to testify in cases filed against them before they were elected members of parliament. Turk has earlier said the court decision against the DTP lawmakers was "unlawful," adding they will not go to the court to testify. The court decided Tuesday to wait for the response of the parliament to its warrant for bringing the lawmakers to the court. The court also postponed the case to September 29.

Editorial Commentary on Turkey Confronting Its Past

Mehmet Ali Birand wrote in tabloid Posta: "PM Erdogan did the right thing by acknowledging the banishment of different ethnic groups from Turkey in the past. However this right thing should be fulfilled with today's action as well. It is the very duty of Prime Minister Erdogan to demonstrate that he does not repeat the mistakes of the past. There are concrete things awaiting his action in that regard, such as the opening of Halki Seminary, the restoration of churches, addressing the Kurdish issue, positive steps toward Armenian citizens of Turkey and steps toward eliminating anti-Semitic rhetoric."

Yusuf Kanli wrote in English-language Hurriyet Daily News: "Remembering that the same PM Erdogan was using recently a rather xenophobic tone that bordered on hate speech, when he referred to some 40,000 'illegal Armenians' living and working in Turkey and reminded the Yerevan government that if they did not behave well, the Turkish government might pack up and send back all, it becomes difficult for me to feel happy over the acknowledgment that it was a

fascist practice to force emigration of the non-Muslim minorities of this land. Even though we have serious questions about Erdogan's sincerity in making that confession, I do have difficulty in understanding why everyone is attacking the premier because he qualified the oppression of minorities as 'fascist practices.' Why don't we better ask ourselves why even today our Jewish population or other minorities continue to emigrate from Turkey? Why is Turkey still losing its gems? Why this resistance to facing our own history? We only have a handful of minorities in this land today all demonstrate the need for replacing the exclusive approach with an inclusive one, the confrontation culture with a compromise one, the rejectionist one with an engagement one. Without its gems this land will be a barren one."

Fehmi Kuru wrote in Islamist oriented Yeni Safak: "It is better to think about things we have done in the past. PM Erdogan's recent statement about the banishment of ethnic minorities should be a reason to confront the past rather than show anger. When we are able to say 'where did we go wrong' then we can look at the future with maturity. Today Turkey has to focus on answering another question: How do minorities who currently live in Turkey feel themselves? If they do not feel okay and if they have problems, it is the duty of government to address these issues and eliminate any complaints."

Ambassador Jeffrey on Kirkuk

ANKARA 00000751 003 OF 004

NTV's morning broadcast reported "In response to Iraqi Kurdish Regional Government President Massoud Barzani's claim to Reuters recently that the U.S. has not done enough to support Kurds' claims in Kirkuk," Ambassador James Jeffrey said, "The United States is committed to working with the United Nations, the Government of Iraq and Iraq's Kurdistan Regional Government to develop follow-on processes to resolve these complicated and sensitive issues, including the status of Kirkuk." While NTV did not source the statement, the statement comes from Ambassador Jeffrey.

North Korea Won't Back Down, Turkey May Lead UNSC Efforts With North Korea

Media outlets note with alarm that tensions are rising quickly in Asia due to North Korea's missile tests. In "Nuclear Tensions Are On The Rise in Asia," liberal Radikal reports, "U.S. President Barack Obama has promised to shield South Korea and Japan against an attack," while, "Pyongyang says the U.S. is preparing for war." Conservative-nationalist Bugun reports in "Obama's Dead End," that "Obama started his tenure calling for dialogue, not conflict," but "the North Korean administration is insensitive to global reactions," to its missile tests this week. CNN Turk reports, "North Korea will not back down." In a related story, mainstream Sabah reports "Turkey Will Administer the Nuclear Crisis," and notes "Turkey will assume the role of the rotating presidency on the UN Security Council as of June 1," and thus, "Turkey will have to play a key role in the settlement of the crisis."

Controversy on Sweeping Landmines on Turkey-Syria Border Continues
Media outlets report that on the controversial issue of the ruling AKP government's plans to remove around 600,000 landmines on the Syrian border, President Abdullah Gul urged the government to relieve doubts amid the mounting opposition against a bill leasing the land to Israeli companies. Gul called on all lawmakers to aid demining efforts, and also refrain from turning the issue into a matter of treason.

Opposition CHP leader Deniz Baykal said Turkey has planted the landmines itself, therefore it should clean the minefields on its own. He noted, "We don't accept the transfer of the land to foreigners; this would be a serious irresponsibility. Thousands of farmers can be employed to earn their living there." Baykal also said the issue gave an opportunity for making a small-scale "land reform" in the region. MHP leader Devlet Bahceli, addressing his party group yesterday, called on the AKP government to withdraw the bill. "Turn from this mistake. The border is a nation's honor," said Bahceli. The pro-Kurdish DTP head Ahmet Turk said the swept lands should be given back to their owners. Turk added the mine clearance efforts should not be limited to border regions, and that

all mined zones should be swept.

Meanwhile, mainstream Milliyet reports Israel's Ambassador Gaby Levy said Israel only wanted to "help" Turkey in the matter. "The Israelis have no intention of seizing land in Turkey. You must get rid of this phobia," said Levy. Levy was responding to criticism that an Israeli company is conducting the demining process. Turkey's high court Council of State (Danistay) has repealed a government decision taken a few years ago to award the contract to an Israeli mine-clearing company, without inviting others to the tender.

Britain's Miliband Visits Ankara

Media outlets report British Foreign Secretary David Miliband, who visited Tuesday Ankara for talks, said Turkey's EU accession would strengthen the EU. Speaking to reporters at a joint press conference with Turkey's chief EU negotiator Egemen Bagis, Miliband said Europe would get economically richer by turning its attention outwards and not focusing inside. "Turkey deserves EU membership. Turkey's EU membership is important for the interests of Britain and the EU's future," emphasized Miliband.

Bagis said Tuesday Turkey's EU process was "not an easy one." Bagis

ANKARA 00000751 004 OF 004

said he had no doubt that Turkey would complete the EU process with patience, determination and efforts.

TV News (CNN Turk)

Domestic

- Fire broke out at a hospital in Bursa, killing eight patients who were in the intensive care unit.

- More than 20,000 Kurds joined the funeral of PKK militant Ali Gever in Yuksekova in Hakkari province. In Semdinli, 5,000 joined the funeral of Leyla Savli, a high-level PKK woman leader.

- On May 28, the EU will open a new EU Information Relay Office in Sanliurfa to provide people in the region with information about the EU and Turkey's accession process. The opening ceremony will be attended by the ambassadors of several EU member states.

- President Abdullah Gul kicked off Tuesday his five-day tour to Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

- State Minister Ali Babacan met with the economists of leading foreign banks to discuss scenarios for possible developments in the Turkish economy in the absence of a deal with the IMF.

- Former justice minister Aysel Celikel has been elected the head of the Association for Supporting Modern Life (CYDD) after the death of the CYDD chair Professor Turkan Saylan.

World

- Greek naval commander Admiral George Karamalakis will visit Turkey next week as the guest of his Turkish counterpart Admiral Metin Atac. Admiral Atac paid a visit to Athens last year.

- The Belgian federal prosecutor Johan Delmulle stressed at the trial of the outlawed DHKP-C (Dev-Sol) organization that the court was dealing with a "criminal and terror organization."

- Austrian politician Josef Proll, known for his firm opposition to Turkey's EU membership, says it was too early to reject Turkey's EU accession.

- A new mass grave believed to contain dozens of victims of the 1995 Srebrenica massacre has been discovered in eastern Bosnia.

- Authorities in Mexico announced three more swine flu deaths, and the U.S. and Canada one more death each.

- Telman Ismailov, the Russian entrepreneur who opened a luxury hotel in Turkey's Mediterranean coastal city of Antalya, draws the

criticism of the Russian media for making investments in Turkey
instead of Russia.

SILLIMAN